

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT IT PINR
SUBJECT: MONTANELLI SEES SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT

SUMMARY. ITALY'S MOST EMINENT JOURNALIST ATTRIBUTES
MUCH IMPROVED ITALIAN SITUATION AFTER SUMMER RECESS TO
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-COMMUNIST MODUS VIVENDI. HE OPPOSES
NEW NATIONAL ELECTIONS UNTIL 1980 TO ALLOW PCI TO BE
ERODED BY ITS MODERATIT . CRAXI AND SOCIALISTS ARE MONTANELLI
ENEMIES BUT HE'S GLAD TO SEE SOCIALISTS FINALLY PULLING UP
THEIR SOCKS. END SUMMARY.

1. INDRO MONTANELLI, BRILLIANT CYNICAL LIBERAL EDITOR OF INFLUENTIAL
CONSERVATIVE DAILY IL GIORNALE TOLD ME SEPTEMBER 6 IN OUR
FIRST MEETING SINCE HIS RETURN FROM VACATION THAT ITALIAN
SITUATION LOOKING UP.

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2. HE HAS REASON TO BELIEVE POLICE ARE FINALLY GETTING CLAWS INTO TH
E
RED BRIGADES AND REBUILDING THEIR COVERT SYSTEM. APPOINTMENT
OF CARABINERI GENERAL DALLA CHIESA TO HEAD ANTI-TERRORIST EFFORT
A GOOD MOVE. AND NEW MINISTER OF INTERIOR, WHILE NOT TO
MONTANELLI'S POLITICAL TASTE, IS APPARENTLY HANDLING HIMSELF
WELL. RESULT: MONTANELLI SAYS RED BRIGADES MAY BE ON DE-

FENSIVE ALTHOUGH CAPABLE OF ISOLATED VIOLENCE.

3. ECONOMIC CLIMATE BETTER TOO, HE SAID. SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS WAS DOING SPLENDIDLY NO MATTER HOW MUCH IT CRIED. HE KNEW VARIOUS ITALIANS WHO HAD QUIETLY GONE ABROAD OR SOLD THEIR COMPANIES WHO WERE COMING BACK AND TRYING TO RE-PURCHASE THEIR FIRMS. THAT MEANT THAT THEY TOO SNIFFED AN IMPROVED OUTLOOK. AS FOR HIS OWN LABOR SITUATION, THINGS WERE NOW GOING SWIMMINGLY WITH HIS TYPOGRAPHERS EVEN IF HE HAD HALVED THE NUMBER WITH MODERN COMPUTER PHOTO COMPOSITION EQUIPMENT.

4. HOW DID HE EXPLAIN THIS TURN AROUND? MONTANELLI SAID HE HAD TO GIVE TWO ANSWERS. AS DIRECTOR OF ILGIORNALE AND LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE COMMUNITY TO DEFEAT THE MARXISTS, HE HAD ONE POSITION TAKEN DAILY IN HIS PAPER. IT WAS BECAUSE THE THREAT OF A COMMUNIST ACCESSION TO POWER HAD RECEDED. THAT WAS THE ROLE THAT HE HAD TO PLAY IN ITALIAN SOCIETY. BUT, THE FACT WAS THAT THE NEW CLIMATE RESULTED FROM THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-COMMUNIST MODUS VIVENDI. IT WAS COMMUNIST READINESS TO COOPERATE THAT HAD TURNED THE SITUATION AROUND. HE WAS NOT SAYING THAT PUBLICALLY. BUT IT WAS THE FACT.

5. THE PRESENT SITUATION WAS A GOOD ONE, FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW BECAUSE IT BOTH ALLOWED A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER AND EMBARRASSED THE COMMUNISTS. THEY WERE IN A VERY UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENT AND SHOULD

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BE KEPT THERE. CONSEQUENTLY MONTANELLI OPPOSED EARLY POLITICAL ELECTIONS. EVENTUALLY, YES, THE PROFIT HAD TO BE TAKEN FROM THE PRESENT PLAY, BUT NOT BEFORE 1980.

6. AS FOR THE SOCIALISTS, THEY REMAINED HIS ENEMY. HE AND THE LIBERALS COULD NEVER ENDORSE A MARXIST PARTY. BUT HE WAS GLAD THE SOCIALISTS WERE AT LAST DIFFERENTIATING THEMSELVES FROM THE COMMUNISTS. HE WISHED THEM EVERY LUCK AND WOULD HELP CRAXI BEHIND THE SCENES AS MUCH AS HE COULD. THAT, HOWEVER, WAS OUT OF NO AFFECTION FOR THE SOCIALISTS NOR THE RESULT OF ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT THEM. THEY WERE ON THE OTHER SHORE.

7. CRAXI WAS A FIRST RATE POLITICAL INFIGHTER, A MAN WITH NO HANG UPS, ARTICULATE, AN IMPRESSIVE SHOWMAN AND MUCH INTELLIGENCE. HE WAS THE FIRST SOCIALIST SINCE NENNI WITH THE CHARM OF A LEADER.

8. ACCORDING TO MONTANELLI, CRAXI WAS NOT ONLY OUT TO ABSORB THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS BUT ALSO THE EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY LEFT. THE SOCIALISTS HAD A RADICAL STREAK THAT THEY COULDN'T LIVE DOWN.

9. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WERE LEADERLESS. ZACCAGNINI WAS AN ICON BEING MANIPULATED BY THE DC LEFT-BODRATO, PISANU, GRANELLI,. IN HIMSELF, HE COUNTED FOR NOTHING. NOR WAS ANDREOTTI RUNNING THE PARTY. IN THE ABSENCE OF MORO, THERE SIMPLY WAS NO ONE WITH A GLOBAL VISION OF PARTY STRATEGY OR IN CONTROL, AS FAR AS MONTANELLI COULD SEE.

10. COMMENT: MONTANELLI'S CONCLUSION THAT EARLY ELECTIONS WOULD BE UNWISE SINCE THE PCI IS SUFFERING FROM ITS SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENT IS A TOTAL TURN AROUND FOR HIM. IT SOUNDS LIKE THE VIEW OF LEFT WING AND CENTER DC LEADERS AND THE PSI IN MILAN WHO HAVE LONG FAVORED PRECISELY THIS STRATEGY. FINA

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